

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested. By this amendment, claims 1, 7, 13-15, 28, 33, 36, 37, and 41 have been amended, and claims 5, 11, 27, and 35 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

New claims 44-46 have been added to more fully claim the subject matter of the instant application. The specification at page 7, line 18, describes majority-vote logic processing. Applicant submits that no new matter has been added, and notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Currently, claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12-25, 28-33, 35-41, and 43-46 are pending of which claims 1, 7, 13-15, 28, and 36 are independent.

The Examiner is thanked for the indication of allowability of claims 3-6, 9-12, 16-25, 27, 29-33, 35-41, and 43 if rewritten in independent form. Applicant submits that claims 1, 7, 15, and 28 have been amended to include the subject matter previously recited in claims 5, 11, 27, and 35, respectively. Claim 36 has been amended so as not to be in an improper single means claim format. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 15-25, 28-33, 36-41, and 43 are in condition for allowance, and notice of such is requested.

Applicant further submits that claims 44-46 depend from independent claims 15, 28, and 36, respectively, and are also in condition for allowance. Formal notice of such is solicited.

Claims 33 and 41 were objected to for informalities in the claim language. Claims 33 and 41 have been amended to properly depend from claims 32 and 40, respectively, and to recite --groups--, instead of "groves." Withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Claim 36 was rejected under 35 USC 112, first paragraph, for being a single means claim. Claim 36 has been amended to recite --means for receiving the plurality of input signals--, and thus Applicant submits that this claim complies with the requirements

of 35 USC 112, first paragraph. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 15, 29, and 36 were rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as anticipated by Wildauer et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,903,555. Applicant submits that this rejection is moot as to claims 15, 29, and 36 in view of the above amendments to the claims. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

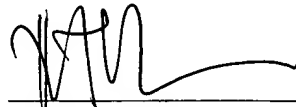
Claims 1, 7, 13, and 14 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over admitted prior art, Honkasalo et al., U.S. Patent No., 6,064,663 and Wildauer et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,903,555. Applicant submits that this rejection is moot as to claims 1, 7, 13, and 14 in view of the above amendments to the claims. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Applicant submits that all pending claims, claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12-25, 28-33, 35-41, and 43-46, are in condition for allowance, and formal notice of such is solicited. If the Examiner has any questions or comments, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

Applicant notes that a Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) is filed herewith under separate cover. The Supplemental IDS submits two articles cited in a search report for an European counterpart application.

Applicant hereby petitions for any extension of time, which may be required to maintain the pendency of this case, and any required fee for such extension is to be charged to Deposit Account No. 05-0460.

Respectfully submitted,



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